

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAB-01 DHA-02 AID-05 OMB-01 SCCT-01

USSH-00 ORM-01 SCS-03 SCA-01 OC-05 CCO-00 A-01 OPR-02

SY-05 PER-01 /102 W

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O P 251402Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6383

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

USUN NEW YORK 2966

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

COMMSIXTHFLT

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

DIA WASHDC

CIA WASHDC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 11964

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: ANNOUNCEMENT OF "DIALOGUE COMMITTEE" HAS TENUOUSLY
POSITIVE EFFECT

REFS: (A) BEIRUT 11910; (B) BIERUT 11955

1. ANNOUNCEMENT OF "NATIONAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE" LATE SEPT 24 (REF B; (NOTAL) ANALYSIS SEPTTEL) EVIDENTLY MODERATED FIGHTING DURING FOLLOWING NIGHT, THOUGH PICTURE WAS MIXED. FLUCTUATING LEVEL OF COMBAT IN THE USUAL EAST BEIRUT BATTLEFIELDS WAS GENERALLY LOWER THAN EARLIER NIGHTTIME AVERAGES. IN TRADITIONALLY QUIET WEST BEIRUT, SEVERAL EXPLOSIONS TOOK PLACE AND INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES HELPED BY PASC (PLO'S MILITARY POLICE ARM) FOUGHT AND DISARMED GROUP FROM "EAGLES OF ZAYDANIYAH", A LIBYAN-BACKED LEFTIST ORGANIZATION. THE SECURITY FORCES ARRESTED 9 LEBANESE AND PALESTINIANS OF THE GROUP AND CONFISCATED 15 KILOS OF DYNAMITE PRESUMABLY DESTINED FOR USE IN WEST BEIRUT. THIS CLASH HAS BEEN WIDELY REMARKED BY OBSERVERS AS INDICATING HELPFULNESS OF PLO. EVEN PHALANGE CLANDESTINE RADIO CALLED IT SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT.

2. AS OF 1200 HOURS (LOCAL) SEPT 25, IMPROVED SECURITY PICTURE IS HOLDING TENUOUSLY. CEASEFIRE NOT FULLY RESPECTED, ESPECIALLY DOWNTOWN WHERE SNIPER ACTIVITY REPORTED, BUT IT HAVING DAMPENING EFFECT. THE WITHDRAWAL OF ARMED ELEMENTS FROM BARRICADES THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO ACCOMPANY SEPT 24 CEASEFIRE IS NOT YET OCCURRING TO SIGNIFICANT EXTENT. A PHALANGE LEADER TOLD EMBOFF SEPT 25 THAT PARTY RELUCTANT TO ABANDON ITS "STRATEGIC" LOCATIONS BUT WOULD LET INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES MAN THEM ON CONDITION PHALANGISTS STAND NEARBY.

3. ZAHLE AND OTHER PLACES OUTSIDE BEIRUT REPORTED GENERALLY QUIET. HOWEVER, OUTBREAK OF FIGHTING BETWEEN LEFTIST PPS AND PHALANGE IN METN AREA NORTHEAST OF CAPITAL DURING LAST 24 HOURS IS WORRISOME NEW FEATURE. WE HAVE NO DETAILS, BUT INTERNAL SECURITY HQ CLAIMS AREA NOW QUIET.
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4. WHETHER BECAUSE OF GOVT EFFORTS OR THROUGH ENTERPRISE OF LOCAL MERCHANTS, BEIRUT FOOD SHORTAGE SEEMS TO BE ABATING. FOOD PRICES ARE DECLINING, THOUGH STILL MUCH HIGHER THAN NORMAL. HOWEVER, FUEL AND GASOLINE REMAIN IN SHORT SUPPLY. GOVT RADIO HAS ANNOUNCED THAT SUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF FUEL ARE AVAILABLE, AND THAT BAKERIES, HOSPITALS AND OTHER ESSENTIAL INSTITUTIONS AND SERVICES WILL BE PROVISIONED

WITHIN AN HOUR AFTER GOVT RECEIVES REQUEST. NONETHELESS TELEPHONE SERVICE IS OUT IN SOME PARTS OF BEIRUT, REPORTEDLY FOR LACK OF FUEL TO GENERATE ELECTRICITY TO KEEP TELEPHONES OPERATING. NEWSPAPERS REPORT GOVT HAS SHIPPED 6,000 TONS OF GASOLINE FROM IPC REFINERY TO MOBILE DEPOT AT DORA NEAR BEIRUT BUT HAS NOT YET BEGUN DISTRIBUTION. TWENTY LITERS, WHICH NORMALLY SELLS FOR 7.25 LEBANESE POUNDS, IS NOW BRINGING LL 25 ON BLACK MARKET.

5. RECAPITULATING PREVIOUS REPORTING WITH NEW INFORMATION, WE LIST FOLLOWING US FIRMS THAT HAVE SENT OUT DEPENDENTS AND OTHER EXPATRIATE PERSONNEL (FOR THE MOST PART TEMPORARILY) SINCE THE CURRENT CRISIS BEGAN: FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK OF NY, CHASE MANHATTAN, MORGAN GUARANTY, INGERSOLL-RAND, BOEING, CATERPILLAR, GENERAL MOTORS, CHICAGO BRIDGE AND IRON, PRICE-WATERHOUSE (NOT PREVIOUSLY REPORTED) AND ABBOTT LABORATORIES (NOT PREVIOUSLY REPORTED). OUR ESTIMATE OF THE NUMBER OF AMERICANS INVOLVED IS ABOUT 200-300, AND WE ASSUME THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER DEPARTURES WHICH HAVE NOT YET COME TO OUR ATTENTION. IN ADDITION, INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER (ABOUT 20 AMERICANS) AND THE OIL FIELD DRILLING MUD FIRM BAROID (ABOUT 50 AMERICANS) PERMANENTLY TRANSFERRED MOST EMPLOYEES JUST BEFORE PRESENT ROUND BEGAN. WITH ONE OR TWO EXCEPTIONS, THESE COMPANIES DID NOT CHOOSE TO EVACUATE IN PRECEDING ROUNDS.

6. ROAD FROM BEIRUT TO AIRPORT IS OPEN AND AIRPORT FUNCTIONING NORMALLY IN DAYTIME HOURS, DESPITE LIMITED AVIATION FUEL. AIRCRAFT ARRIVING WITH ENOUGH FUEL FOR ONWARD FLIGHT.

7. TO BEST OF EMBASSY KNOWLEDGE ALL AMCITS ARE SAFE, EXCEPT UNIROYAL EMPLOYEE NAMED JOHN HENDRICKSON MOUNT WHO WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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CAUGHT BY SNIPER FIRE SEPT 25 AND WOUNDED, THOUGH NOT SERIOUSLY, ON FINGER AND BACK. HE IS RECEIVING MEDICAL ATTENTION AND WILL RECOVER. BRITISH, INDIAN, AND NIGERIAN EMBASSIES HAVE DECIDED TO EVACUATE AT LEAST SOME DEPENDENTS.
GODLEY

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